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Intelligence Report

Warsaw Pact Capability for an Invasion of Yugoslavia

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*Central Intelligence Agency
Directorate of Intelligence*

March 1977

Key Judgments

With their longstanding interest in Yugoslavia, the Soviets can be expected to try to take advantage of whatever instability results from the death or incapacitation of President Tito. Such efforts most likely would take the form of political and economic pressure.

We do not believe that the Soviets are likely to resort to military intervention, as they did in Czechoslovakia. Analogies can be drawn between the two situations, but there are clear differences, all of which militate against an invasion of Yugoslavia. The USSR is not contiguous to nor does it have hegemony over Yugoslavia, as was the case with Czechoslovakia. Yugoslavia does not lie on a potential invasion route to the Soviet Union. Moreover, large-scale military intervention would involve substantially greater risks to the Soviet Union. The Yugoslavs would almost certainly offer armed resistance, and a prolonged struggle could invite outside interference.

Nevertheless, there is a possibility that, after weighing the alternatives and potential advantages, Moscow would decide on military intervention. This probably would require up to 50 Soviet and allied divisions, with supporting air forces. Twenty to 30 divisions probably would be used to invade Yugoslavia, with the rest held in reserve. Mobilization of such a force would be unprecedented for the Warsaw Pact, requiring the callup of possibly as many as 500,000 reservists. Force preparations and movement on this scale would provide clear indicators of Soviet readiness to invade.

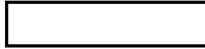
The Soviets might divert some units from Central Europe, but they would be unlikely to use many from that area because of concern that action in Yugoslavia would increase the likelihood of war with NATO. Most of the invasion force probably would be drawn from Hungary,

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Bulgaria, and the Carpathian, Odessa, and Kiev Military Districts (MDs).

If the Soviets did invade, they probably could quickly overrun the northern plains. They almost certainly could not secure the whole country in the short term, however, and the situation probably would degenerate into a prolonged guerrilla war similar to that which occurred in Yugoslavia in World War II. Such developments would exact high political, military, and economic costs from the Soviets and increase the possibility of Western intervention.

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Warsaw Pact Capability for an Invasion of Yugoslavia

Introduction

The Soviet Union has a strong interest in the political orientation of Yugoslavia and almost certainly will seek to influence Tito's succession. Moscow would have a wide range of options following the death or incapacitation of Tito, but political or economic action would be the most acceptable and least risky. Military action probably would be a "last resort" for the Soviets, but it is an alternative that they might consider.

This paper addresses Yugoslavia's defense capabilities, the Soviets' capability for military intervention, the size of the invasion force that might be mobilized, the probable extent of participation by other Warsaw Pact members, and the likely course of intervention. It does not attempt to describe the circumstances that might lead to an invasion or all of the consequences of invasion.

Our understanding of the Warsaw Pact's invasion capability rests on an analysis of the existing forces on both sides, an examination of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, and a study of Balkan geography and transportation systems.

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YUGOSLAV DEFENSE CAPABILITY

Yugoslavia's nationwide defense system, considerably strengthened following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, attempts to provide the most effective deterrent for a small state of modest means. Belgrade seeks to deter invasion by convincing potential invaders that almost every eligible Yugoslav—either in the relatively small standing armed forces or in the larger territorial and civil defense forces—would be involved in the country's defense.¹

Ground Forces

The ground forces of the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) are organized into 8 infantry divisions, 25 independent brigades, and 16 independent regiments.

Upon full mobilization, the force could reach a strength of about 350,000—roughly equal to the estimated size of the first echelons of a potential Warsaw Pact invasion force. Major ground combat units are dispersed throughout the country, with some concentration along the borders. Antiarmor units—independent tank brigades, antitank regiments, and divisional antitank elements—are deployed near the Hungarian border and opposite the mountain passes connecting Yugoslavia with Italy, Albania, and Bulgaria. (See foldout map following text.)

Yugoslav ground forces are on the whole less mobile and less well equipped than Warsaw Pact forces. They have some 1,500 T-54, T-55, and M-47 tanks in service. This force is inferior to, and is at least 2,500 tanks smaller than, the force available to the Warsaw Pact for an invasion. The disparity is partly offset, however, by Yugoslavia's independent antitank regiments and divisional antitank battalions, which are

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equipped with SU-100 assault guns, 100mm T-12 antitank guns, and jeep-mounted AT-1 (Snapper) antitank missiles. The Yugoslavs have an unknown number of AT-3 (Sagger) missiles, both man-packed and vehicle-mounted, probably at battalion level and lower.

Air and Air Defense Forces

For air defense, Yugoslavia relies primarily on 117 MIG-21 Fishbed interceptors—mostly older models—deployed in three air defense regiments. More than half of the interceptors are based in hardened shelters, with some in underground hangars tunneled into the sides of mountains. SA-3, SA-6, and SA-7 surface-to-air missiles provide a growing, but still small, supplement to older SA-2 missiles and anti-aircraft guns.

To support the ground forces, the air force has six tactical air squadrons, composed mostly of Yugoslav-made Jastreb and Galeb ground attack aircraft, plus a few F-84G Thunderjets and domestically produced light attack aircraft. The force totals about 300 jet aircraft, including combat-capable trainers and reconnaissance aircraft.

Naval Forces

The Yugoslav Navy has some 135 combatants—mostly small, coastal patrol craft intended for protection of the country's irregular coastline. These vessels, including 10 Osa class guided-missile boats, could provide some measure of defense against an amphibious attack or a close-in naval blockade.

Territorial and Civil Defense Forces

The YPA is supported by a Territorial Defense Force (TDF) of approximately 3 million citizens. The TDF is divided into small, local defense units and larger units called "partisan" divisions or brigades. Most of its manpower comes from YPA reservists, some 75 percent of whom are assigned to the TDF upon detachment from active duty.

Yugoslavia's defense is also bolstered by a large Civil Defense Force. The Yugoslavs claim that some 2.5 million civilians are trained and could be mobilized for wartime assignments with civil defense organizations throughout the country. These units regularly train with YPA and TDF units in major exercises.

Defense Doctrine

Against a massive attack, Yugoslav strategy,

calls for a two-phase defense. During the first phase, the YPA intends to fight a delaying action close to the borders for 1 to 3 days—the time believed to be required for activating and preparing the territorial and civil defense organizations. The high command would move to bunkered command posts in the mountainous center of the country and be joined there by most of the YPA and some of the "partisan" territorial units. Most of the territorial force would continue the resistance in the areas "temporarily occupied by the enemy."

This strategy is designed to deny a quick victory to an invader. The Yugoslavs believe that by means of many small actions they can harass the enemy, tie up inordinate numbers of his troops, and make it increasingly difficult for him to hold territory.

WARSAW PACT FORCES AVAILABLE FOR INVASION

Force Requirements

Moscow is of course aware of the serious risks involved in open intervention in Yugoslavia. The Soviets probably believe that most Yugoslavs would stoutly resist an attack, and they would also have to consider the possibility that an invasion would provoke Western military counteraction. Thus, in contemplating an invasion, the Soviets would be likely to consider the need to maintain their posture toward NATO as well as their requirements for forces in the Balkans. In addition, Moscow would probably weigh the impact of an invasion on political stability in Eastern Europe and might reserve some military forces for contingencies in Warsaw Pact countries.

In the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, nine divisions from Soviet forces in East Germany and Poland joined other Soviet and East European units. The redeployment of these divisions did not seriously weaken the Soviets' capability in Central Europe, because of Czechoslovakia's central location and the reinforcement of the forward Soviet armies by forces from the western USSR. Furthermore, the risk of war with NATO over Czechoslovakia was small.

Yugoslavia, on the other hand, is not a member of the Warsaw Pact, is not contiguous to the USSR, does not lie on a potential invasion route to the USSR, and is outside the sphere of direct Soviet influence.

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Moreover, armed resistance to an invasion would be almost certain. The combination of these factors could provoke Western intervention and would increase the risk of a general European war.

The possibility of armed conflict with both Yugoslavia and NATO would pose a problem for Moscow. Soviet divisions in Central Europe are among Moscow's best units. The Soviets would clearly wish to use some of these divisions in Yugoslavia, but would not be likely to risk moving a sizable force away from Central Europe. Thus, most of the invasion force against Yugoslavia probably would be drawn from the less combat-ready units of the southwestern USSR and from the Balkan countries, with support from naval units in the Black Sea and the eastern Mediterranean.

The intervention in Czechoslovakia required the largest Warsaw Pact mobilization ever. During the crisis, the Soviets mobilized in the USSR 10 to 13 Category II divisions and at least six Category I

divisions and their supporting units by calling up some 130,000 to 150,000 reservists.² About 20 Pact divisions moved into Czechoslovakia during the first days of the invasion.

A similar force for use against Yugoslavia would require an even larger mobilization than in 1968, because it probably would be formed mostly from units in the southwestern USSR that in peacetime are manned at lower levels than those that took part in the 1968 intervention.

But Moscow probably would want an even larger force because of the likelihood of heavy resistance. A force 50 percent larger might include up to 30 divisions in the first echelons and 20 in reserve. The marshaling against Yugoslavia of an invasion and reserve force of between 40 and 50 divisions would require the mobilization of 25 to 40 Category II and

² See below for categorization of Soviet divisions.

SOVIET FORCE STRUCTURE AND PEACETIME MANNING

During peacetime the Soviets maintain the structure and major elements of virtually their entire wartime ground force in being, but nearly all units are manned at less than full strength. In this way, the Soviets provide a ready framework for rapid and massive expansion during wartime, while avoiding the economic strain of maintaining fully manned standing forces.

There are about 170 active ground force divisions in the Soviet Army. The peacetime manning and equipment levels of these divisions vary considerably. For analytical purposes, the divisions can be classified into three categories.

Category I: Some 60 Soviet divisions are estimated to be maintained at nearly full strength. Category I divisions in the Soviet groups of forces in Eastern Europe are manned at a higher percentage of their wartime strength than those in the USSR. Category I divisions have all of their critical combat and support equipment.

Category II: Some 50 divisions are manned at about two-thirds wartime strength. They possess all of their critical combat equipment, but some are deficient in support equipment, including general purpose vehicles.

Category III: The remaining active divisions have an assigned peacetime strength of up to one-third of wartime strength. They possess all critical combat equipment but are more deficient in support items than Category II divisions.

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SOVIET MOBILIZATION DURING CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS

Soviet Groups of Forces in Eastern Europe

All divisions were already near combat strength (Category I) before the crisis.

Twelve to 14 divisions moved toward Czechoslovakia as the crisis developed.

Internal USSR

Ten to 13 Category II divisions and at least six Category I divisions were mobilized.

About 130,000 to 150,000 reservists were called up to fill out divisions, to complete the support elements of the five reduced-strength field armies that were involved, and to establish the rear services organization required to support the forward deployment and invasion.

Nine to 11 divisions moved toward Czechoslovakia.

Three divisions from the Odessa Military District remained in position along the Romanian border, apparently to maintain military pressure on Romania.

Invasion Force

At the peak of the intervention, some 31 Soviet and East European divisions were either in Czechoslovakia or near its borders in support of the intervention. These included:

- eight divisions from the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany
- one division from the Soviet forces in Poland
- three divisions from the Soviet forces in Hungary
- about 11 divisions from the western USSR
- three Polish divisions
- two East German divisions
- smaller elements of Hungarian and Bulgarian forces
- the main elements of two Soviet airborne divisions and one Polish airborne division.

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III divisions and the callup of some 350,000 to 500,000 reservists. The total force might reach a million men. (See pages 4 and 5 for a comparison of the 1968 Soviet mobilization to the projected mobilization for a Yugoslav crisis.)

Ground Forces

The first echelons of an invading ground force of six to eight armies—made up of some 20 to 30 divisions and supporting units, 4,000 to 7,000 tanks, and 200,000 to 400,000 men—could be drawn mostly from the Carpathian, Kiev, and Odessa Military Districts and from Hungary and Bulgaria. (The forces available are identified on the foldout map.) Soviet airborne elements could come from the airborne division in the Odessa Military District or from any of the other six active airborne divisions located farther from Yugoslavia.

Among the East Europeans, the Bulgarians probably would play the largest role. Bulgaria, the Soviet Union's staunchest ally along the "southern tier," has differences with Yugoslavia over ethnic affairs and territory. The Hungarians probably would not participate as willingly, and might therefore be used mostly as garrison and support forces. The Romanians almost certainly would not take part; in fact, the Soviets might have to detail forces along their border with Romania to ensure that country's neutrality.

The Soviets could press other Warsaw Pact members to join the invasion for symbolic reasons. Probably no more than token German, Polish, or Czechoslovak forces, however, would be used.

The Soviets could use units from other areas either to reinforce the initial invasion force or to guard against the possibility of interference by other nations. There are 12 divisions (including one airborne) west of

MOBILIZATION FOR AN INVASION OF YUGOSLAVIA

The marshaling of a 40 to 50 division invasion and reserve force would probably require:

- four Category I divisions from Soviet forces in Hungary
- three Soviet Category I divisions from the Carpathian Military District
- two Soviet Category I airborne divisions
- up to 25 mobilized Category II and III divisions from the Carpathian, Kiev, and Odessa Military Districts
- up to eight divisions from other Soviet groups of forces or military districts (Nearly all the internal divisions would require large numbers of reservists to be called up.)
- three or four Bulgarian divisions, all of which would require call-up of reservists to fill about 25 percent of their wartime strength
- three or four divisions from Hungarian and possibly other East European forces. (The Hungarian divisions would require a reservist callup to fill out about 25 percent of their wartime strength.)
- a callup of about 350,000 to 500,000 reservists to fill out the above divisions and their support and rear service units. Total ground force size—active duty personnel and mobilized reservists—might range from 750,000 to 1 million men.

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the Ural Mountains in the Moscow, Ural, and Volga Military Districts. These divisions, most of which are at a low level of readiness in peacetime, constitute a general reserve for use in any of the theaters opposite NATO or in the Far Eastern Theater.

Another 18 divisions (including one airborne) are available in the North Caucasus and Transcaucasus Military Districts. The Soviets have mobilized and moved westward at least one of these divisions in exercises, but most of this force would probably remain in place for contingencies involving Turkey or Iran.

Moscow might deploy some divisions from areas relatively far from Yugoslavia. In 1968, the Soviets sought to limit economic disruptions caused by the mobilization through selective use of divisions from different areas, several of them remote from Eastern Europe.

Air Forces

A force of some 400 to 500 aircraft from bases in Hungary and Bulgaria would be available to conduct tactical air operations against Yugoslavia. These aircraft probably would be drawn mainly from Soviet tactical air regiments stationed in Hungary and from Soviet units deployed from the Odessa Military District to airfields in Bulgaria.³ Bulgarian aircraft also might assist.

About 530 intermediate-range bombers subordinate to Long Range Aviation are in the western USSR. This force is intended mainly for strikes against NATO, but the Soviets could use some of the planes against Yugoslavia directly from their home bases to supplement strikes launched from Hungary and Bulgaria.

The Soviets probably would not shift large numbers of aircraft from other military districts to assist in operations over Yugoslavia. Sufficient aircraft are available in Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Odessa MD to ensure air superiority. Most of the aircraft that would be available in the Carpathian MD, for example, would probably be reserved for contingencies in Central Europe. Such replacement and reinforcement aircraft as might be needed for the operation in Yugoslavia could come from the Transcaucasus or Kiev Military Districts.

Naval Forces

Naval support would be provided by the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. This force is made up for the most part of surface ships from the Black Sea Fleet and submarines from the Northern Fleet. In addition to minor combatants and logistic support ships, the squadron on the average consists of 10 submarines (2 cruise missile equipped units and 8 conventional attack units), 9 major surface combatants, and 2 amphibious ships.

The Soviets would almost certainly reinforce the squadron ahead of time if they planned to invade Yugoslavia. The reinforcement probably would take from 2 to 3 weeks and primarily would involve surface units from the Black Sea Fleet and submarines from the Northern Fleet. Although surface units from the Northern and Baltic Fleets could be used, they would more likely remain in home waters for contingency purposes.

We would expect to see a Mediterranean Squadron, after reinforcement, of at least 25 to 30 major surface warships, about 25 submarines, and 7 or 8 amphibious ships. The Black Sea Fleet's force of approximately 120 land-based strike and reconnaissance aircraft probably would not be used against Yugoslavia but would be available for support of the Mediterranean Squadron, should NATO-Pact hostilities ensue.

INVASION FORCE PREPARATIONS

Force Mobilization and Movement

The current disposition of Soviet and other Warsaw Pact forces is unfavorable for an immediate invasion of Yugoslavia. Only one Soviet division in Hungary is located within 100 kilometers of Yugoslavia. There are no Soviet divisions in Bulgaria or Romania, and most of the invasion force would have to move some 1,000 kilometers to reach the Yugoslav border.

In 1968, the Soviets had sizable combat-ready forces in countries bordering Czechoslovakia and relatively easy access for reinforcements from the western USSR. With the large force and the distances involved in mobilization for Yugoslavia, many combat and support elements would require at least 2 weeks to get into position and ready themselves for invasion.

The Soviet Southern Group of Forces (SGF) in Hungary could be in position within 3 days, but most Hungarian and Bulgarian forces probably would take from 1 to 3 days longer. Within 10 to 20 days, Soviet

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ground force elements from the Carpathian MD could move by road and rail to concentration areas along the Yugoslav-Hungarian border.

The movement means and times for Odessa MD forces are more difficult to predict. The Soviets plan to move forces from Odessa into Bulgaria to assume wartime positions. Usually this would involve overland movement through the eastern Romanian province of Dobruja. Romania, however, has imposed restrictions on Soviet transit during Pact exercises, and Moscow would be uncertain about Bucharest's cooperation during a Yugoslav crisis. The Soviets might therefore move most of the Odessa forces by sea. In about 2 weeks, four divisions could mobilize, move to ports, load onto vessels, cross the Black Sea, and unload in Bulgaria.

Ground forces from more distant areas, and some support units which do not exist in peacetime, could take more than 2 weeks to move into position. A prolonged period of crisis, however, would afford Pact planners ample time to prepare and marshal their forces. The period of political-military maneuvering preceding the invasion of Czechoslovakia, for example, was about 4 months.

Warning Implications

Political maneuvering and an increase in the Pact's intelligence collection effort are almost certain to precede military action. Some of these activities would indicate to both NATO and the Yugoslavs that the possibility of intervention was increasing.

Preparations for military operations, however, would provide clearer indications of the extent to which the Soviets were ready to invade. The Pact would likely spend several days, probably under the guise of an exercise, establishing and testing command communications for forces to be used in the invasion. We might also see some changes in the pattern of training in Soviet and East European forces. Major logistic stockpiling activity also would be a signal of preparations for large-scale military operations as opposed to exercises.

The deployment of large ground force combat units toward Yugoslavia would be the most visible indicator of preparations to intervene.

The problem at that point would be to determine whether the Soviets had actually decided to invade or whether they were engaged in an elaborate show of force designed to put pressure on Belgrade while at the same time increasing the Pact's capability to invade.

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The Soviets might threaten military action for several weeks, or even months, while attempting to reach a political solution. In that case, Belgrade would face a difficult decision regarding mobilization. Successful defense against a Soviet attack would depend in part on a timely callup of the civilian Territorial Defense Force. From an economic and psychological point of view, however, full mobilization of the army and the TDF, which together constitute about one-sixth of the entire Yugoslav population, would be extremely difficult to sustain over a prolonged period. The arming of civilian forces also could increase the threat of civil war among ethnic, regional, and political rivals within Yugoslavia.

In any case, the Soviets would have the initiative. Even if Belgrade had ample warning, as did Prague in 1968, the Soviets could achieve surprise as to the time, place, and means of invasion.

INVASION FORCE OPERATIONS

Objectives

Warsaw Pact forces invading Yugoslavia would almost certainly seek to enter the country quickly, to isolate opposing forces, to seal the country's borders with Western nations, and to seize key political, administrative, economic, transportation, and communications centers. Most of the invasion force would probably be committed initially to the northern plains and the major cities of Belgrade and Zagreb. Another major attack probably would come through the passes on the Bulgarian border toward Nis and Skopje. A large-scale thrust against the less accessible and more easily defended southern coastal region and the interior highlands might be deferred.

Direct involvement by the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron would be unlikely. The squadron would probably establish a barrier force of ships in the

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Ionian Sea, at the entrance to the Adriatic, to deter Western naval involvement.

Ground force action would likely be preceded or accompanied by internal subversion and special airborne operations. Pact intelligence agents would probably attempt to assist and direct pro-Soviet Yugoslav factions in facilitating an invasion. Such internal assistance would be most critical during the opening hours of intervention, when Soviet airborne forces would seek to disrupt resistance.

Air Assault

As in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Soviets probably would attempt to spearhead an invasion of Yugoslavia with extensive air operations designed to provide electronic countermeasures (ECM) against Yugoslav radar and communications; air superiority; protection for the transit of airborne, tactical air, and command elements to key Yugoslav airfields; and surveillance of friendly and hostile forces. The Soviets probably would attempt to land airborne troops at some Yugoslav airfields in order to provide bases for bringing in troops and supplies by air, to obtain forward air bases for subsequent counterair and combat support missions, and to deny the Yugoslav Air Force the use of those airfields.

ity of hardened shelters are intended to protect the air force from surprise attack at the beginning of hostilities and to ensure that some aircraft survive to harass the invader during the later stages. Nevertheless, the invaders almost certainly would be able to achieve air superiority.

The Soviets probably would attempt to seize airfields near Belgrade and Zagreb, and possibly near other major administrative, transportation, and communications centers. The degree of success of such operations would depend largely on the extent to which airborne forces achieved tactical surprise, received assistance from pro-Soviet elements within Yugoslavia, and were relieved by advancing ground force columns.

Overland Movement

Advancing ground forces seeking to link up quickly with air-delivered elements probably would advance into Yugoslavia along the axes shown on the foldout map.

Ground forces could be expected to use helicopters extensively for reconnaissance and support. In addition, helicopter-borne troops probably would attempt to seize potential bottlenecks and defensive positions along the route of march—such as the Danube River bridges near Novi Sad and the strategic road and rail junctions near Nis.

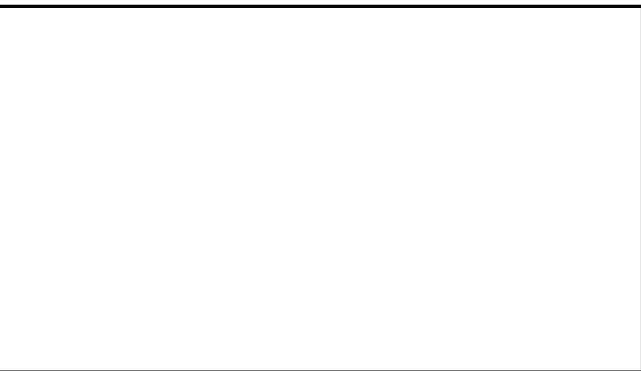
The best terrain for large-scale Pact military operations is on the plains extending into Yugoslavia from Hungary and Romania north of the Danube. The network of roads there could sustain military traffic year round. Off-road dispersal and rapid cross-country movement of vehicles and infantry would be possible most of the time between mid-April and late November.

Forces entering from Bulgaria, however, would have fewer transportation lines and river valleys. Cross-country movement would be precluded or severely hindered by mountainous or hilly terrain.

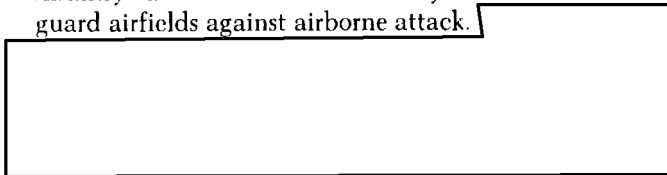
An attack through Austria is unlikely, as it would offer only a limited tactical advantage at the expense of violating Austrian neutrality and risking a wider conflict. Nor would an attack through Romania be necessary. It would facilitate an early seizure of Belgrade, but it could also lead to a wider conflict.

Consolidation

Operations in the rest of Yugoslavia would be more difficult than the initial phase of the invasion.



Belgrade, however, has made preparations to prevent the surprise capture of its airfields. The Yugoslavs have assigned quick-reaction, antiassault infantry and antiaircraft artillery detachments to guard airfields against airborne attack.



Once they are convinced that an attack is imminent, the Yugoslavs also plan to disperse most of their military aircraft to more protected air bases in the mountainous interior. Dispersal and the availabil-

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Subsequent movement, over less favorable terrain and without the benefit of surprise, would be considerably slower and more hazardous.

In the hills and mountains which comprise about 80 percent of the country, conditions are generally unsuited for large-scale conventional ground operations or for airborne assaults. Steep slopes, numerous deeply entrenched streams, and rough surfaces confine vehicular movement to the sparse network of poorly developed roads. These roads, most of which are loose surfaced, have numerous sharp curves, steep grades, and narrow bridges, and would require almost constant maintenance to sustain military traffic. The steep terrain surrounding the larger valleys and basins restricts low-level approaches by supporting air. Conditions are good for guerrilla warfare.

Pact planners have not, to our knowledge, considered in much detail the problems of unconventional warfare in rugged terrain or urban areas. The near certainty of popular resistance on a scale more effective and widespread than that in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or Hungary in 1956 would appear to ensure a

difficult and costly consolidation phase for the invading forces.

A Warsaw Pact invasion of Yugoslavia could run a course which, in many respects, would be similar to that during World War II. In April 1941, the Germans launched an attack along some of the same axes the Soviets probably would use to enter Yugoslavia. Within a week they had captured Belgrade and Zagreb, advanced along major transportation lines into the interior and down the coast, and forced Yugoslav regular forces to surrender.

Subsequent guerrilla activity, however, generally increased in size and scope with each year of occupation. On the northern plains, the flat, open terrain and relatively good transportation network helped the occupation forces suppress resistance. In the rugged southern terrain, guerrilla units gradually forced the Germans to restrict their defenses to the larger cities, industrial installations, and most vital transportation lines, leaving extensive areas in the hands of the irregulars. At their peak occupation strength, the Germans were forced to commit 30 to 35 divisions and a sizable number of police units in their attempt to secure Yugoslavia.

CONCLUSIONS

Although an analogy can be drawn with the invasion of Czechoslovakia, there would be definite differences in the event of military intervention in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia is outside the sphere of direct Soviet influence, and Moscow would be much more hard pressed to justify intervention. Belgrade has steered a delicate course between the superpowers, reassuring the Kremlin that socialism is safe in Yugoslavia, but still pursuing good relations with the West and the Third World. Intervention could thus cost Moscow dearly among nonaligned nations and cause the demise of detente with the West, if not outright counteraction. Most important, Yugoslavia would offer serious resistance to a Soviet invasion, tying down a large number of Warsaw Pact forces, inflicting heavy military and economic losses on the USSR and its allies, and increasing the possibility of Western intervention.

Belgrade undoubtedly hopes that the above factors are adequate to deter the Soviets. The Soviets nevertheless might consider the benefits from military intervention (or, more likely, the risks from not intervening) to outweigh the perceived costs. If a

decision to invade is made, Moscow has the capability to mount a substantial military attack. Force preparation and movement for invasion would probably take at least 2 weeks.

Warsaw Pact forces invading Yugoslavia probably could overrun the northern plains and the country's principal cities within a few days. In spite of Yugoslav preparations, the Soviets would likely have an initial advantage because of:

- the superior mobility and firepower of their ground forces;
- the ability to achieve air supremacy at the outset of the campaign;
- tactical surprise and initiative, despite the near certainty of strategic warning; and
- the aid of pro-Soviet factions in Yugoslavia, possibly under conditions of general internal disarray.

The Soviets are likely to face strong opposition in both the cities and the mountainous regions. The

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terrain of the highland regions, the training and organization of the Yugoslav Army, and the probable determination of most segments of the population to resist foreign invasion would make total subjugation of the country a difficult task.

The number of Warsaw Pact forces required to occupy all of Yugoslavia would depend on such imponderables as the capacity of the Yugoslavs to exploit their mountain terrain and to sustain organized resistance after the more accessible parts of the country were lost. A prolonged guerrilla war might require Moscow eventually to deploy as many as 50 Warsaw Pact divisions into the country.

The Soviets probably would have to allocate sizable forces along Yugoslavia's borders to prevent outside

arms from reaching resistance forces. Although we do not know how extensive the Yugoslavs' war reserve stocks are, or how effectively they could wage war while living off the land, resistance beyond a few months would likely depend on their ability to secure outside aid. The Soviets probably would be unable to prevent aid from filtering in, given Yugoslavia's extensive coastline and the mountainous borders with Italy, Austria, and Greece. Such aid could both prolong the conflict and increase the possibility of an East-West armed confrontation.

In any case, the Soviets would have the initiative. Even if Belgrade had ample warning, as did Prague in 1968, the Soviets could achieve surprise as to the time, place, and means of invasion.

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Forces and Invasion Routes



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